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MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF POLITICS.

* **N**APOLEON has expressed his design of forming an internal communication by a canal between France and the Baltic, and intimated his intention to the British government. We think this a subject worthy of reflection. We have always

* To the list of his titles, he has just added a new one, "Emperor of France, Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, King of Italy, &c. and Dealer in Tobacco." Let Britain beware of the eventual danger which may result to her revenue from this rival *Tobacco*ist. Britain is a shop that depends upon customers. The war against our trade, and the non-consumption of the continent are what she ought most to fear.

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thought that the ambition of the emperor of France has been, *of late*, turned to the works of peace. War-like ambition, with him, is consummated. He has established his character as the first warrior of this or perhaps any other age. What remains ? *That*, without which all his victories will be of little account in the estimation of posterity, and *are*, it is likely, as little in his own—the triumphs and trophies of peace. The world is yet to be astonished by more uncommon deeds than the extraordinary issue of some great battles. Here, indeed, a mere military man may place the summit of human excel-

lence, and it is probable that during his campaigns in Italy, the fortunate decision of the battles of Millesimo, or of Lodi, was the supreme ambition of Bonaparte; but he moves now in a higher and more comprehensive sphere, and he must now dedicate great genius, unexampled activity, and extraordinary power, to grander displays of these eminent qualities, than could be manifested in the carnage of a campaign. Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena, and numerous other battles which we wish not to enumerate, are but the rough, unhewn blocks, cemented indeed with blood, and hid in the earth, yet affording support to the solid fabric of the temple of *peace*. It may perhaps be necessary, as it were, to *conquer* the reform and melioration of mankind, and a thousand grand schemes for the improvement of the world, and the furtherance of human happiness, which appear as visionary as the ideas of Columbus did to the grandees of Spain, may ripen *into act* when genius, and ambition are joined to unprecedented *power*. The impracticable, or at least what was always supposed as such, will be compassed by the man, whoever he may be, that can wield the mighty mass of human labour to grand uses, and employ the all-contriving head to direct the all-performing hand.

Alexander the great, was not greatest at the battle of Arbela, nor in the passage of the Granicus, nor in storming the gates of Oxydrace. His greatness consisted in having a mind bent upon grand schemes to which his victories were the preliminary means. War was not his *ultimate* object; it was only an instrument for the attainment of philanthropic purpose. For this, was Alexandria founded; for this, Nearchus was directed to explore the Indus; for this was India itself in-

vaded. He longed, with the aspirations of glorious ambition, for that *pacific* power which could turn human intelligence in the most advantageous direction for human happiness, and make, what Bacon has called, that happy marriage between the mind of man, and the nature of things. When he became master of the Persian empire, he easily perceived that to render his authority permanent and secure, it must be established in the affections of the nations which he had subdued, and that in order to acquire this advantage, all distinctions between the victors and the vanquished must be abolished. Liberal as this plan of policy was, nothing could be more repugnant to the prejudices of his countrymen. Even Aristotle advised Alexander to govern the Greeks like subjects, but those who were usually named *barbarians*, as *slaves*, as creatures of an inferior species. But, such were not the ideas of his magnanimous master, who, however, to the misfortune of the human race died at the age of 33; and it is not without sensibility, we yet read the circumstantial diary which Appian gives of the last days of this truly great man, from which we shall only extract the conclusion: "27th day, The fever had made rapid progress, and continued during the day, without abatement." "28th day. The soldiers now clamorously demanded to be admitted, wishing to see their sovereign once more, if he were alive; and suspecting that he was dead, and his death concealed. They were suffered, therefore, to pass through the tent, in single file, without arms, and the king raised his head with difficulty, holding out his hand to them, but could not speak!" what a noble subject for a historical picture! The veteran soldiers in march through the royal tent, thrown open for their reception; each cast-

ing, as he passed, a last despairing look upon his king and general, who, struggling with death, strives to recognize his faithful companions, and stretches towards them that hand, with which he had been so often accustomed to point out the road to victory. Ptolemy, Antigonus, Seleucus, and the rest of his generals, standing in fearful prescience of the evils consequent upon his dissolution, and Aristotle himself finding philosophy a vain succour for the loss of his monarch, his pupil, and his friend.

It *may* happen that Napoleon is sincere in his expressed desire for peace; that, after his prototype Alexander, he *may be* desirous of accomplishing grand schemes for the improvement of his territories, and the conveniency of his people, which, certainly, no other power would have the malignancy, if they had the opportunity to obstruct. People are apt to ask, how are the armies of France to find employment, except by being constantly engaged in war. What? Must the redundant population of countries be always gathered in a great plain for the purpose of destroying each other? Are there no canals to be cut, no harbours to be enlarged, no wastes to be reclaimed, isthmuses to be divided, no mountains to be levelled, no valleys to be filled up, no cities to be built or beautified? This earth to genius and industry is as clay in the hands of the potter. In short, we believe that Bonaparte is, and that the British government ought to be desirous of peace. If he makes the proposition, as probably he soon will, may it be accepted of in the spirit of peace, and let men of every country make the most of the earth and the ocean.

Many of the state papers issued by the French government indi-

cate that peace is their present object, and we are told that Bonaparte contemplated the late negotiation for establishing a cartel for exchange of prisoners, unhappily for the interests of humanity now broken off, as a mean to assist to bring about a general pacification. We are also informed, that Holland was not annexed to France, before an offer was made to the British government, to relax in the system of claiming the dominion of the sea as the price of the independence of Holland. But though Bonaparte is desirous of peace, he does not relax in his schemes of annoyance, and he increases his line of coast by the incorporation of Holland, and the Hansetowns, when his terms are rejected. He has likewise introduced his plan of naval conscription, a plan as contrary to justice as the impressing of seamen, but probably for his views under the present circumstances of the continent, more efficacious. The bad policy of the British government has essentially contributed to make France a great military nation. A continuance of a like ill fated system will most probably in the course of years make the French power great by sea, and consummate the system of blunders. All eyes are turned with anxious expectation to the measures of the regent, and time has yet to unfold whether with a change of men, there will be a radical change of measures.

Among the documents will be found the conclusion of the report on American manufactures. The detail of their progress may be contemplated without the mean jealousies, which have too long been the distinguishing characteristic of the British nation, whose views were almost exclusively bounded by the illiberal notion of commercial monopoly. In addition to

the clamour of merchants, we have latterly had the equally interested cry of civilians, and the judges and officers of prize courts, who are inordinately enriched by increasing the flames of war. Hence originated the orders in council, so pernicious in their effects to these countries, and which, very contrary to the design of their promoters, have so materially contributed to promote the infant manufactures of America. The concluding paragraphs of the report contain some sound commercial axioms, from which our mercantile politicians and legislators might gain instruction. We request our readers may peruse them with attention. They may assist to correct some prejudices imbibed from the tendency of our commercial system.

The President's message to congress received since our last publication, and also given among the documents, affords abundant scope for reflection to those who look beyond the surface, and contemplate the proceedings of this, at present the freest government in the world, and which in course of time may probably become the greatest. The language respecting the two belligerents of Europe, is temperate, and discovers a prudent distrust of the intentions of both. The observations on education are highly liberal, and manifest an enlightened policy, while the notes for preparing their military organization grate discordantly on the ears of philanthropists. Must this fair portion of the earth partake also of the horrors of a military system, and must they follow the distracted and bewildering politics of the old governments of Europe? The paragraph on their finances, presents a favorable picture to contrast with our overburdened state, and proclaims in strong language, the superior happiness of

a nation, which can keep itself disencumbered with wars: a privilege which we hope the United States will not rashly forego.

The public papers continue to give alarming accounts of disturbances in the southern, middle, and western counties of Ireland. The bonds of social order are greatly relaxed, and oppressions, to remedy which no timely or effectual precautions were taken, are likely to prove a severe scourge to the thoughtless promoters of a system, which gave present ease, and precarious power to the higher classes, who were too indifferent to the future mischiefs, of which they were sowing the seeds. They are now alarmed, but not yet instructed, so as to change their system. They look only to force for a remedy, and force is now opposed to force so as to be likely to produce a dreadful collision. We are not advocates for outrage, whether practiced by the poor towards the rich, or by the rich towards the poor, but we anxiously desire to see grievances redressed, and oppressions, though sanctioned by long continued usage, removed.

Oppressions felt by minds, which have not been enlarged by education, goad to acts of savage ferocity. The ideas of such are confused on the subject of strict justice, and it is only the rational man, who seeks to remove the evils he feels, by wise and judiciously adapted means. The southern 'squires, and their advocates, whine because their fowling and hunting are interrupted,* but in the acts of opposition to those practices on the part of the insurgents, may we not perceive the dictates of natural justice, in opposition to the unnatural inequalities of the law? The game laws transfer the property of animals,

* See the Domestic Occurrences.

which ought to be common to all, to the higher classes of society; and hunters unjustly and probably illegally, invade their neighbour's property, by breaking down his fences. Ignorance prompts individuals to take the remedy into their own hands, but enlightened policy would urge the higher classes to examine into causes, before the effects are rashly and vindictively punished.

The debates in each house upon the regency question present to the plain understanding of the public, a strange exhibition of legal fictions, and a monstrous jumble of constituted authorities.—Lawyers and statesmen are men framed by nature and education to move in very different spheres; but whenever it happens (as at present) that there are not men qualified by their talents and dispositions, to move in the superior orbit of mind, the business of the state must, of necessity, fall into the management of those subordinate, and subaltern characters, who are perfectly adequate to ordinary occasions, but in great and unexpected conjunctures, are altogether deficient. Accustomed as they have been to wind their professional way “*per ambages rerum*,” having had all their lives to make use of fictions, and ingenious fallacies to get rid of the barbarism and feudality of former times by evasion without overturning precedent, they introduce the same blind attachment to precedent, on those extraordinary occurrences of state affairs, which have no precedent, otherwise they would cease to be extraordinary.

It is, at these times, that sublimity, simplicity and sincerity, qualities personified in the late Mr. Fox, are the requisites of the great statesman, who would have victoriously repelled the absurdity of two out of three co-ordinate estates, themselves imperfectly formed, “*ex*

mero motu” creating the third estate by a fiction, and while they are doing so, assuming and exercising of themselves, no small portion of the executive power; and all this built upon an inchoate and imperfect precedent, that is, on no precedent at all. But lawyers, * who become ministers of state, conduct themselves *coastwise* on the chart of the constitution, from precedent to precedent, as from headland to headland. When forced, by some gust of fortune into the ocean, they fall to cursing their stars, rather than consult them for safety. Our ignorance and incapacity in looking for legal fictions in great and grave questions of state, would induce us to think that the whole and undivided authority of the crown might have merged on the present occasion, as constitutionally, in the legitimate successor to the throne, the heir apparent, as in either house of parliament; neither of which houses could be the less competent to exercise their right and duty, according to the constitution, of imposing such restrictions on the regent as might secure the re-assumption of royal power on the recovery of the king, and in that security, we think all would be attained that was necessary. But the truth seems to be,

* Cicero, in one of his epistles, describes a good Lawyer, but we cannot recognize a single quality of a great statesman. “*Servius hic nobiscum hanc urbanam militiam respondendi, scribendi, cavendi, plenam solitudinis ac stomachi secutus est: jus civile didicit: multum vigilavit; laboravit; præsto multis fuit. Multorum stultitiam perpessus est, arrogantiam pertulit; difficultatem exoribuit. Vixit ad aliorum arbitrium, non ad suum. Magna laus et grata hominibus unum hominem elaborare in ea scientia, quae sit multis profutura.*” How would Cicero be surprised at seeing a lawyer of this description, become the prime minister of one of the greatest nations in the globe!

that the illegitimate estate, which may be called the borough-mongering estate, wishes in all cases to manifest its power in controuling even the authorities constitutionally constituted; it is the spring of the party spirit of the present time, not less in degree than what took place in 1788, though not headed with such personal ability, and personal ambition; and it will form the great vexation in the administration of the regent, and the grand obstruction in his wishes to satisfy a loyal and generous people.

The prince has sanctioned the two houses in the claim of right and power of imposing restrictions, notwithstanding the great minority, or rather the majority in both houses must probably, in the event of his refusal, have placed the executive power undiminished in his hands, after some time had elapsed. But he did not wish that the machine of government should stand still, in such a perilous season, 'till a question comparatively unimportant, were decided, when every day is interesting to the salvation of these countries. His first act (be it remembered) has been a sacrifice of his private feelings on the altar of public duty. He has, in this, displayed at once his moderation, and his magnanimity, but he has expressly said, in auspicious words, that it is only upon the CONSTITUTIONAL advice of an ENLIGHTENED parliament, and the zealous support of a loyal and generous people, he relies for the relief of the nation from its present dangers and difficulties. The defect of representation must be remedied, and by that means alone, will he ever be able to obtain constitutional advice from an enlightened parliament, the extinction of faction, and the unanimous support of a generous and loyal people. By what means can the wisdom of parliament be more constitutionally conveyed, than

by keeping up a more strict correspondence with the constituent body, and from whence is the representative body, opaque and dark as it is, to acquire light, but by a reflection from the fountain of power, the source of light and liberty, the PEOPLE?

Evident symptoms appear that the people are becoming tired of the Pittite system, and in the hopes of getting rid of it, they are desirous that the Prince of Wales should be appointed Regent, without having his hands tied up so that he may not be hampered by the anomaly of two courts, and two systems of influence counteracting each other. It is hoped that the prince will be disposed to pursue plans far different from those by which the affairs of the empire have latterly been conducted. In his answer to the two houses, he has expressed himself in handsome terms, that he has equal regard for the welfare of the people, as for the security of the crown. In his answer in 1789, he with great propriety declares that the regal power is a trust for the benefit of the people—a just and enlightened sentiment! Divested of the wish to see the prince at liberty to follow the dictates of his own heart, and that the system of the last fifty years should be radically changed, the late debates in parliament, as to forms and legal fictions have been extremely wearisome and uninteresting, little or nothing of sound reasoning, or constitutional principle was produced on either side. The aim of the faction holding the reins of government is directed to prevent the intended regent, from doing the good he might be inclined to do, lest the probability of their return to power hereafter might be lessened. Much evil may result to the nation from a delay of investing him with full powers. Princes are liable to change like other men, and if the opportunity be now missed,

the inclination may not again return. To gain permanent popularity, and to establish himself firmly in the hearts of a grateful people, a complete change of system is requisite. The tide of popular feeling is now strongly in favour of the prince. Not only the venal, the worshippers of the rising sun, and the vicars of Bray applaud; but the independent portion of the community have their hopes and expectations strongly excited. Their fears also are raised. The prince may now establish himself in the hearts of the people; but if any temporising policy or compromising timidity occur to enfeeble his councils, and if the men he chooses do not prove honest, and brace up their minds to bear the shock of the present crisis of unparalleled danger with firmness, the re-action of popular favour will be severely felt.

The parliament has been at length opened by the great seal being affixed by a vote of both houses to a commission for that purpose, and a bill introduced into the house of commons for appointing the Prince of Wales Regent. The principal restrictions are, not to create any peers for a limited time, and that part of the household establishment should be under the control of the Queen. The latter restriction appears very unreasonable as to the extent to which it has been carried by the majorities in the commons, in favour of the plan proposed by Spencer Perceval and his coadjutors. He claims merit for his attachment to the king, and his adherents are loud in their applauses of "hear, hear," on his professions, but to the impartial he appears as only desirous to retain as much power as he can in his own hands, or rather perhaps to procure it for one, who possessing great ambition, or rather insatiable avarice, will permit him and a se-

lect few to be the ostensible distributors of it. The people take the opposite side, and wish to see the Regent unrestricted, that the measures of reform, which are looked for from him and a new ministry, may not be impeded. Charles Jas. Fox used to say "that confidence was a plant of slow growth with men of long experience," and it is scarcely prudent to be lavish in bestowing praise by anticipation. The struggle for power is evident; the people are no farther interested than as to the question, who will use it best; and the present men have justly forfeited the confidence of the reflecting part of the nation. The question whether *the master of the Buck-hounds* shall be under the controul of the queen, may at first glance appear ludicrous, but it becomes of importance when it is viewed as an affair of patronage. The holders of that office, and of many similar ones are members of parliament, and form component parts of the majorities by which measures obnoxious to the people have been often carried. If it be allowable in the present crisis to wish a preponderance of this influence to the Prince; surely they who look beyond the temporary party politics of the day are justified in desiring to have future restrictions on all undue influence on any side, and while the adherents of princes contend for power to their respective parties, the people should have their attention undeviatingly fixed on a REFORM which would correct all these abuses.

We insert among the documents, a petition from the town of Nottingham, and the resolutions of the Common Hall of the city of London. The Common Council had passed similar resolutions the day before. We give them a place in our records, because we approve of the increas-

ing popular spirit of the country, and because they breathe more of the spirit of genuine freedom, than the resolutions of some greater assemblies. It is our aim to cherish the spirit of liberty in whatever place we find it existing. If our native country gave similar indications, gladly would we record them. But the genius of Erin is not yet awakened.

Our review of foreign politics may be short. The crisis of affairs in Portugal is rapidly approaching, and may probably be terminated before the procrastinating forms now slowly going forward, will allow the Prince of Wales to be invested with the office of Regent. The French have crossed the Zézere in several directions, and appear to meditate vigorous measures. In Spain there is little consolatory, and the dream of Spanish patriotism which caused so great a popular delusion among us, for a time, has nearly lost its influence. Cadiz is closely and vigorously besieged, and the Cortes do not establish their character for an honorable disregard to party views in the present crisis of their country. They have banished the members of the former council of regency, without a trial.

Constantinople has been disturbed by the Janissaries, those machines of the old military despotism, and the scourges of the princes and the people. Turkey may soon be expected to change their former despotism, for a better organized, but not a more just system of military power, under the direction, and at the mandate of the present ruler of continental Europe.

In Norway we are informed that the people have manifested strong opposition to the naval conscription introduced into their country, through French influence. Such a resistance was to be expected from a simple people like the Norwegians,

living remote from luxury, and cherishing a spirit of independence amidst their native rocks and mountains.

In South America the spirit of revolution spreads throughout that vast continent, as well as in the Southern provinces of North America, which were under the dominion of Spain. A contest has long subsisted between the old and the new settlers, or the Spaniards by descent, and the Spaniards by birth. It appears probable, that at no very distant period, the entire continents of America will be independent of Europe. Such a change furnishes scope for imagination at present, and for hopes of the amelioration of mankind in future.

DOCUMENTS.

Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, on the subject of American Manufactures, made April 17, 1810, in obedience to a Resolution of the house of representatives.

(Continued from No. 28, page 394.)

PAPER AND PRINTING.

Some foreign paper is still imported; but the greater part of the consumption is of American manufacture: and it is believed, that if sufficient attention was every where paid to the preservation of rags, a quantity equal to the demand would be made in the United States. Paper-mills are erected in every part of the Union. There are twenty-one in the states of New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode island, and Delaware, alone; and ten in only five counties of the states of New-York and Maryland. Eleven of those mills employ a capital of two hundred thousand dollars, and 180 workmen, and make annually 150,000 dollars worth of paper.

Printing is carried on to an extent commensurate with the demand. Exclusively of the numerous newspapers, which alone form a considerable item in value, all the books for which there is an adequate number of purchasers, are printed in the United States. But sufficient data have not been obtained to form an estimate of the annual aggregate value of the paper made